



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

At the Coulter Faculty Center staff planning retreat this summer, we chose a theme for our work this year- Guiding Faculty: Transformation, Direction, and Support. This theme

has allowed us to frame our thinking about the needs of faculty at WCU.

Our job is to guide, not to dictate. We offer faculty a set of instructional and technological tools to enhance teaching, learning, and research. While we are limited to university-supported tools, there are many options and choices for faculty in their use. Our teaching tips, workshops, office hours, and small group analysis are designed to give faculty a rich repertoire from which to choose. Our research tools- Qualtrics for surveys, Atlas ti for Qualitative Analysis, and SPSS and SAS for quantitative analysis, support the different forms of the Boyer Model of Scholarship. Our special focus is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Read more about our efforts in this area in this issue.

Transformation speaks to the professional growth and development of faculty, recognizing that faculty are at different stages in the process. Our new faculty support is far different from the needs of senior faculty and our hope is that senior faculty are taking leadership roles in the mentoring of their newest colleagues. Ultimately, we hope that transformation results in meaningful student learning experiences.

Direction relates to our role in WCU's implementation of the QEP. Our services for course development and program redesign place emphasis on helping faculty determine what students need to know and be able to do, what assessments measure these objectives in an authentic way, and how those objectives align to the learning goals of the QEP.

Support is synonymous with our role as faculty developers to create a safe haven where faculty may receive professional development and advice in a confidential setting. In addition, our eleven faculty learning communities provide the powerful support of peers to study and grow in a topic of interest.

Please look for our email each Monday "This Week at the Coulter Faculty Center" for events and opportunities for the week. Additional information is available at our website at <http://facctr.wcu.edu> or by calling extension 7196.

We look forward to seeing you.

Anna T. McFadden
Director and professor



Harnessing the Power of Facebook for Faculty Development by Robert Crow

With more than 300 million users, Facebook is now the leading social networking site in the world. With the most active users aged 35 and older, this venue has become more than a networking site frequented by college-aged clientele. The power behind Facebook lies in its connectivity – a characteristic that can be harnessed in a variety of ways that support the University's mission of creating engaged learning opportunities.

The Coulter Faculty Center is now capitalizing on this Web 2.0 tool by tapping into Facebook's strengths – facilitating user autonomy and promoting collaboration. Each academic year, the Center sponsors various Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs). This year there are eleven in total. Each FLC has a number of participants who meet frequently throughout the semester to plan events and to publish scholarly work. As is sometimes the case, word of these meetings, activities, and products sometimes gets lost in the mix. An innovative approach to keep FLC-related information current is to use a social networking platform like Facebook.

Already in existence at WCU is a Facebook site dedicated to the University. From interested applicants to recent alumni, Facebook is already serving to connect Catamounts worldwide (<http://www.facebook.com/WesternCarolinaUniversity>). Like the University site, or page as it is coined in the Facebook world, various other organizations such as Career Services, the Women's Center, and other independent groups on campus are already up and running. Currently, the Faculty Center is piloting the use of Facebook to connect our various FLCs. Participants may voluntarily become fans of the site (as opposed to friends – the analogous counterpart of roles assumed when one connects with a person in Facebook). The group's fans benefit from the ability to harness collaborative power while autonomously controlling the direction and scope of the various FLCs – the fans are the ones who are driving the networking engine.

Capitalizing on the user-driven nature of the site, fans will enjoy the luxury of distributing need-to-know information, such as meeting updates, changes to agendas, and so on, to other fans of the learning communities. Fans also have the ability to take polls of the group's interests, capture and disseminate feedback, and change the course-of-action as the most up-to-date information accumulates on the site. The main benefit, and one that has always been the case with Facebook, is that fans become more interconnected as participation inside this medium exponentially grows. To get involved, call Robert Crow at 227-2761, or email rcrow@wcu.edu.

What’s New in Digital Media

by Neil Torda

DIGITAL MEDIA SERVICES CONTINUE TO IMPROVE AND GROW

WCU on iTunes U

Last spring we reported that between September 2008 and April 2009, we had over 23,000 downloads from our iTunes U site. That number grew to almost 30,000 by the end of the semester. That was then... On August 18th, WCU on iTunes U was opened up to the public, and the public has been visiting. In September alone there have been over 50,000 downloads. The week of September 20th saw 15,096 unique file downloads!

If you aren't familiar with iTunes U, it is a collection of free educational media from universities around the world. Take some time and browse the amazing amount of content professors from all over have made available to anyone, for free. You can get to our iTunes U site by going to <http://itunes.wcu.edu> and following the login prompts. Because our iTunes U presence is tied to the Banner system for authentication, you can set the permissions for your course any number of ways. It can be locked down so that only members of your course section have access, or open to just WCU students, or open to the entire world.

If you would like to find out more about WCU on iTunes U you can attend one of our workshops or contact Neil Torda for more information.



Wiki and Blog services

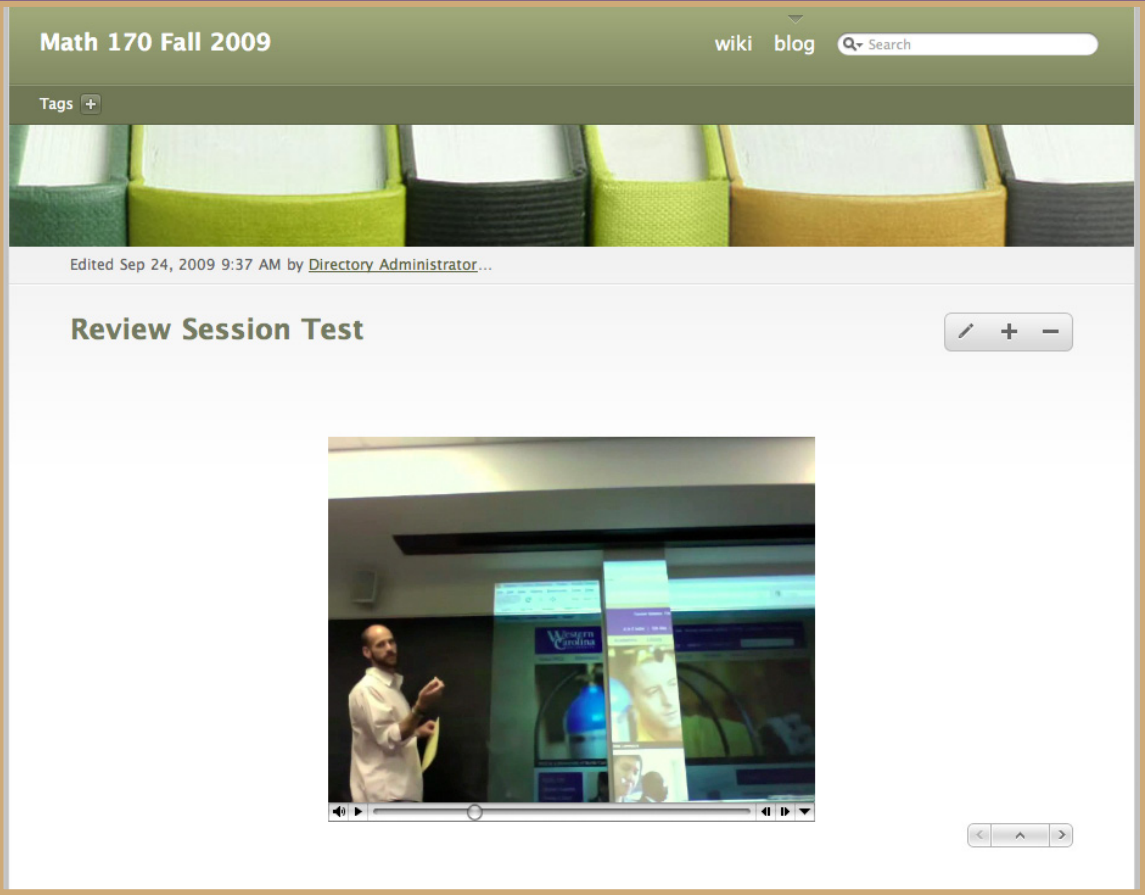
The number of faculty, staff and students who are using our collaboration services continues to grow; we currently have more than 230 wikis and nearly 250 active bloggers. Blogging services are already self service. If you are interested in creating a blog for yourself or your students, just go to <https://media.wcu.edu/users> and click the “Create Your Weblog” button to get started.

Starting in the Spring Wiki’s will also be self service. Faculty will be able to create their own wiki’s and determine who has read and write access. For more information about the new wiki services, please go to <https://roma.wcu.edu/wiki>.

Introducing: Podcast Producer

Now that we have familiarized you with Wikis, Blogs and iTunes U, it is time to upload some content into those systems. You can now take a .mov or .mp4 video file and upload it using the Podcast Producer web site. Our digital media services will work with you to create a custom workflow that determines exactly what happens to your movie. For example, you could have titles automatically created and added to the front of your movie, then have two different copies, a high resolution, and a iPod optimized version of the movie uploaded to both a wiki as well as your class in iTunes U. You can have separate workflows for each class you teach, so worrying about which course it needs to be uploaded to is taken care of by the server. You can also take any sort of PDF or Word Document and upload using the Montage workflow to create a slideshow movie of your document.

If you are a Macintosh user, it gets even better. Using the Podcast Capture utility that is built into Mac OS 10.5 and 10.6, you can do a live capture straight from your Macintosh. With 10.5 machines you can record audio, video from your built in camera or your screen with audio and the Podcast Producer server takes care of encoding and



Assistant Professor John Wagaman, used Podcast Producer, to enhance his Math 170 course.

posting the content as soon as you are done. Users of 10.6 when it becomes available on campus will be able to create a multi-input video, which will allow for Picture in Picture lectures with your face and slides automatically edited for you.

John Wagaman assistant professor has already started using this system for his Math classes. Here is what he had to say about the ease of use and functionality:

“Within the first two hours of setup, I created a screen capture video for installing the statistical program R for Mac OS X for my students in MATH 672. I made the video with audio in about 5 minutes. To make something similar with screenshots would have taken me much longer without the possibility of audio.

A day after setup, I tested it during MATH 170 where I recorded myself talking at the board for a minute, and two minutes later I showed my students a video on their class wiki of what they just saw and heard me say two minutes earlier. It’s the most awake I’ve seen my students all semester.”

By using Podcast Producer in your classroom, you will be able to record audio or video of your lectures that is automatically posted to your wiki, blog or iTunes U course shell. For more information about this system visit <http://roma.wcu.edu/lecture>. If you would like to try it out, come by the Sandbox or contact Neil Torda.

What’s New with WebCat

by Chris Baxley



It has been a busy summer for the WebCat team! We began work on some great new features and upgrades in May 2009, which helped the team prepare for the fall 2009 term. Here is a peek at some of the great new things that the WebCat team has been working on:

WebCat at Western Carolina University Website

In May the WebCat team launched a re-designed web presence (which you may visit by going to <http://www.wcu.edu> and then click on the “WebCat” option on the top menu). Not only does the site provide a clean, minimalistic new look, but the underlying technology allows the WebCat team to provide site updates from any location that has an internet connection.

WebCat System Update

Over the July 4th holiday, our WebCat environment was updated from Blackboard Vista 4 to Blackboard Vista 8. This update, while currently operationally transparent to users, provides some great new features (such as blogs and journals) which we should roll out soon. Stay tuned to the WebCat at Western Carolina University website for more details.

Online Access Form

Our most popular update is the new online access request form. This feature was launched in August and simplifies the request process when an instructor needs to add another individual to a course that he or she has previously taught or is currently teaching. The online access request form can be found on the WebCat at Western Carolina University website.

SANDBOX.WCU.EDU is Here!

by Jason Melvin

The Coulter Faculty Center Sandbox has a new presence online: sandbox.wcu.edu. The Sandbox website is a new resource for faculty to find tips, tutorials and how-to videos on almost everything the Sandbox has to offer. Here are some of the new features and resources we’re excited to offer:

Tip of the Week

On the front page of sandbox.wcu.edu, you’ll notice the “Tip of the Week” video which will feature various software and other services we offer in the Sandbox. Every week, a member of the Coulter Faculty Center staff will bring a new tip or showcase a piece of software that we support in the CFC. Check back every week for new tips and how-to’s.

Reserve a Workstation

With the addition of the new Sandbox website, comes the opportunity to reserve a workstation to ensure it will be available for you when you arrive. Common software packages such as Microsoft Office and Adobe CS4 Suite are available on multiple computer workstations. But there is specialized software, such as

Final Cut Studio, Screenflow, SPSS, Respondus and others, that is only available on a few select computers. To reserve a workstation, click on the “Reserve a Workstation” link located on the right sidebar of the Sandbox homepage. When selecting a workstation, you will be able view each workstation’s available software and added peripherals, before deciding which workstation you would like to reserve.

Tutorials

One of the best features of the Sandbox website, is the growing list of tutorials available to help you through some of the more common tasks involved with teaching; whether your class is online or face-to-face. Click on the “Tutorials” tab at the top of the page to choose from three available formats: Text, Video, or the Dell Learning System. We are continuously creating more and more tutorials to further meet the faculty needs.

[Sandbox.wcu.edu](http://sandbox.wcu.edu) is just another resource the Coulter Faculty Center is providing for you. If you have any comments or suggestions on how to better the Sandbox website, please contact Jason Melvin at jmelvin@email.wcu.edu or by phone at 828.227.3023.

University Task Force to make recommendations for new LMS

By John LeBaron, *Task Force Chair*, JMRobinson Distinguished Professor for Educational Technologies.

Last April, Provost Carter formed a new Learning Management System (LMS) Task Force to recommend a new platform to replace WebCat when WCU’s current contract with Blackboard expires in June, 2011. The Task Force is comprised of envoys from each of the colleges, plus a student and representatives the Coulter Faculty Center and the Division of Educational Outreach. It is led by John LeBaron and has been meeting regularly since its inception, soliciting feedback from faculty and staff, examining documents from in and outside the university, and working with the University’s WebCat Team to collect stakeholder data.

In order to field-test an alternative to the current WebCat platform, a pilot project of the open-source LMS, Moodle, has been launched. During this past summer volunteer faculty members from across the University developed courses in Moodle for full implementation this fall. The pilot is now in full swing. In addition to Moodle, a new version of Blackboard (Bb-9) is also under consideration for adoption. The Task Force wished to field-test both systems, but neither the staff nor the technical resources to support a two-platform pilot are available.

Alternatively, sample courses in Bb-9 and Moodle have been made available for user evaluation. WCU faculty and students are strongly encouraged to examine these two sample courses, and to send their impressions to John LeBaron or Anna McFadden. To view the sample Moodle course, go to <http://moodlepilot.wcu.edu>. In order to view the sample Bb-9 course, please go to <http://ncvista9.blackboard.com>. In both cases, log-in using “wcudemo” as your username and password. “Piloteers” and other interested faculty are now being polled for their assessments of Moodle compared with WebCat and Bb-9.

Task Force members include Chris Baxley, Michael Caudill, Sharon Dole, Regis Gilman, John LeBaron, Bill McDaniel, Anna McFadden, Carlie Merritt, Zach Phillips, Peter Savage and Michael Thomas. The group expects to transmit its recommendations to the Provost no later than the end of this fall semester.





Chaos in the Classroom

by Robert Crow

What do you do when you are faced with a much larger enrollment than you had expected? Moreover, you find that you aren't exactly the sage-on-the-stage whose exceptional lectures are capable of holding students' attention for an entire lecture period. Inattention and passivity become de rigueur as your students' glazed-over eyes and yawns signal their yearning for a different mode of instructional delivery than lecture alone. Rather than relying on only a one-way monologue – why not try incorporating Peer Instruction into your teaching.

Imagine this picture: Your forty-odd students are all abuzz as ten simultaneous conversations ensue over the subject-at-hand. Sound like chaos in the classroom? Quite the contrary – invoking the method of Peer Instruction requires students to actively think about a question posed and challenges them to provide a cogent rationale to your prompt – justifying their answer not only to you, the instructor, but also to their peers.

Used successfully in higher education, the method of Peer Instruction can be easily incorporated as an enhancement to your lecture. The main idea is to interject throughout your lecture carefully crafted questions that explore, on a deeper level, underlying concepts and

difficult-to-understand material. Implementing this technique involves giving small groups of students two to three minutes to think about and discuss a question that you pose to the class. Students are given the opportunity to formulate their groups' answers in an attempt to arrive at agreed-upon solutions. In doing so, the instructor deflects being the authority and invites students to share equal responsibility for interpreting course concepts.

Peer Instruction enhances learning by exposing common difficulties in understanding course material. This form of instruction further enhances learning by revealing misconceptions that may exist in students' thinking and allows learners an opportunity to self-assess their own understanding before leaving the classroom. Research shows that not only do students make conceptual gains using this strategy, they also hone their problem solving skills as peers (and instructors) model ways of “thinking one's way” to a solution. When students articulate their thought processes by comparing theirs to those of others, this thinking is made visible as open dialogue between the teacher and the student. For more information on peer instruction, contact Robert Crow at rcrow@wcu.edu.

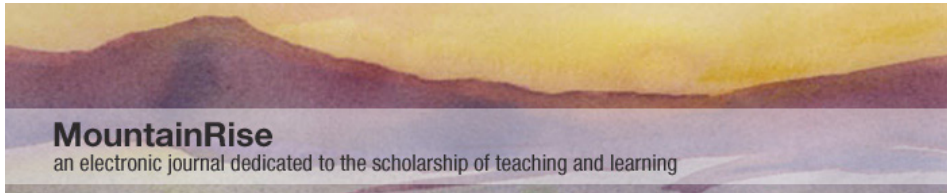
SoTL Update: The Year of Purpose-Driven SoTL

by Laura Cruz, Senior Fellow for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The Carnegie Academy of Teaching and Learning is phasing out its formal support of SOTL programs across the nation and is asking institutions to choose their own paths for moving forward, and “purpose driven” SOTL is the Coulter Faculty Center's vision for the future. In recent years, WCU has experienced great success in developing and recognizing SoTL as a form of scholarship. In recognition of that success, we are emphasizing “purpose driven” SoTL, in particular the production of SoTL research that actively benefits teaching and learning on our campus. This will take the form of scholarship partnerships, i.e. small-group initiatives that engender interesting discussions about how what we do works and how it relates to broader disciplinary, cross-disciplinary,

and institutional developments. The purpose of purpose driven SOTL is to enhance the teaching and learning work already being done on campus and to gain recognition for the work of our faculty and our institution.

A big part of the purpose driven SoTL life is the journal *MountainRise*, our own peer-reviewed SoTL journal. *MountainRise* has recently expanded to include different genres of SoTL scholarship, including case studies, and it has also expanded its readership. Now a part of the EBSCO host educational data-



base, *MountainRise* is accessible to those doing research in fields such as SoTL at the institutional level, the subject of our recent special summer issue. The issues includes an article about WCU's success in incorporating Boyer into faculty awards (written by WCU faculty) as well as a provocative piece by noted Carnegie scholar Richard Gale. Planned theme issues for the upcoming year include SoTL and the Social Sciences and Case Studies in SoTL.

New Wimba Software Offers a Live, Virtual Classroom

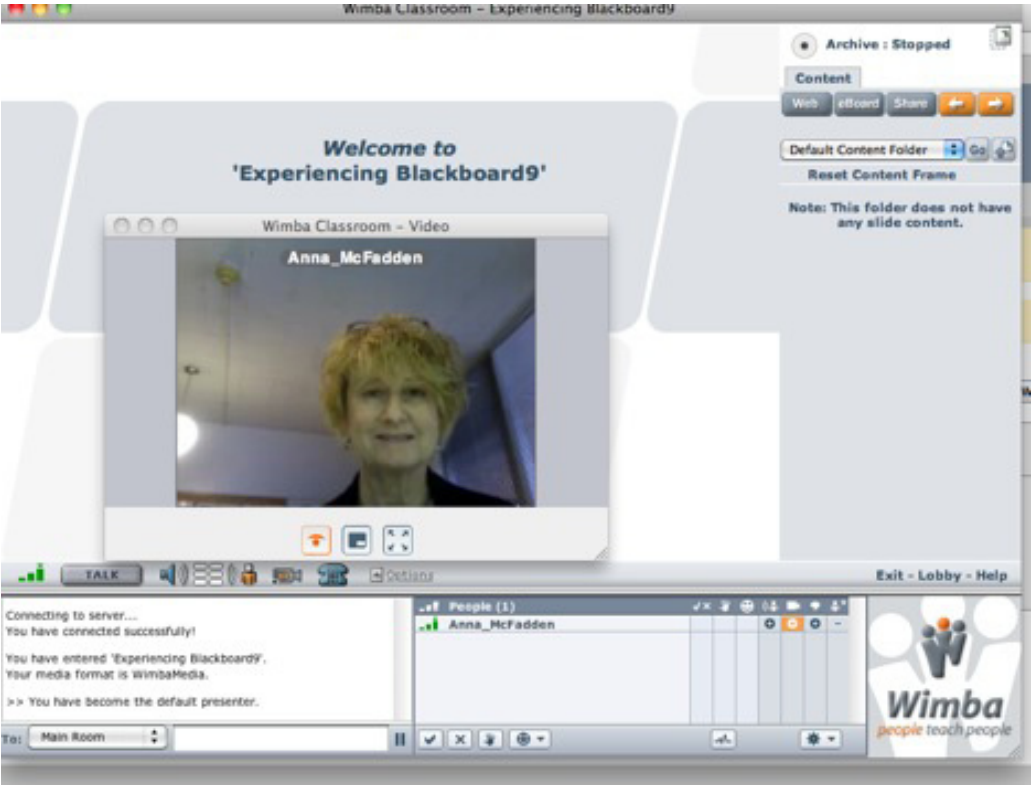
by John Hawes

Wimba Classroom is one of the newest items in the WebCat Learning Management System toolbox. It combines the capabilities of several online collaboration products into one easy to use suite that creates a vibrant interactive virtual classroom. In a Wimba Classroom students and instructors can use text chat, voice and/or video to communicate. An electronic white board allows the sharing of PowerPoint presentations, web pages, even applications from the presenter's computer desktop. What you'll do with Wimba Classroom is only limited by your imagination:

- Delivery of lecture content for distant education
- Students don't need to drive miles to WCU to take advantage of what our outstanding faculty can offer
- A meeting place for students to work on projects together
- When given the Wimba presentation tools, students can collaborate from any location as their schedules permit
- Virtual office hours
- Use a webcam and it's the next best thing to being there
- A classroom for “flu days”
- Archive (record) your classes using Wimba and when the fever breaks, students can catch up on everything they missed
- Presentation skills practice
- Use a webcam, archive your presentation, and review where you need a little polish
- A classroom for “snow days”
- Inclement weather needn't disrupt your syllabus, set up a Wimba Classroom and hold class from home
- Conference from your office
- You can meet and collaborate with your peers without spending a dime on travel

Wimba Classroom is a great way to reach out to students and keep them engaged.

Call the Coulter Faculty Center for a demonstration. 227.7196



Anna McFadden experiences the video possibilities within Wimba Classroom.



COULTER FACULTY CENTER

182 Hunter
Cullowhee, NC 28723
828-227-7196 | facctr.wcu.edu

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
CULLOWHEE NC
PERMIT NO 1

THE COULTER FACULTY CENTER STAFF

